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NORTHAMPTON MERCURY
www.northampton.chron.co.uk Thursday, February 26,20

Business profile: The Plant Man, Park Hill, Braybrooke LE16 8LP Phone: 01858 530787 Website: www.theplantman.net

THE PLANT MAN RE-OPENING ON 28TH FEBRUARY

Your local Plant Men - the new Bill & Ben? This weekend sees the re-opening of The Plant Man nursery, based on the outskirts of Market Harborough, near Braybrooke.

and has an extra-ordinary knowledge of the subject. But as the business has growis small team has constantly struggled keep up. So, in 2014, while still employelsewhere, lan made the decision to add another member to The Plant Man team.

Opening its doors five years ago, the nursery has quickly gained a reputation in the local area for the quality of its plants. The nursery was started from scratch 10 years ago by owner, Ian Colledge, and trading began in 2010 by just opening on weekends, to allow Ian to continue working at his full-time job (running another Garden Centre!).

'We weren't sure it would work when we started, because we aren't on a main road and we couldn't afford to advertise heavily'. Friends and family tried to warn Ian that his idea might fall at the first hurdle. But he needn't have worried. Ian soon

But he needn't have worried. Ian soon decided to push on, to open 7 days a week the following year.

The Plant Man is a traditional nursery, not a Garden Centre; they now grow over 100,000 plants themselves. 'And we love to give old fashioned, personal service', beams Ian. Ian has had a lifelong passion for plants,

the subject. But as the business has grown, his small team has constantly struggled to keep up. So, in 2014, while still employed elsewhere, Ian made the decision to add another member to The Plant Man team; his twin brother, Gary, Ian's senior by 10 minutes. 'Gary comes from a management and service background so it made perfect sense to me to get him to take the reins, and help develop the business further. It was the best decision I ever made', explains Ian. Being twins, Ian and Gary naturally look - and think - alike. 'We both hate bad service', says Gary, 'so we always do our best to make customers feel at home on a subject many have little experience of'. Gary has introduced a new Loyalty Card scheme for all customers, and has taken over much of the running of the business now, to allow Ian to leave his other job and concentrate on growing more plants and helping customers.

'But I'm still struggling to come to terms with being told what to do by my little brother', says Gary.

The Plant Man nursery reopens Saturday 28th February

"The Plant Man -Ian Colledge; a lifelong passion for plants"





"Ian and Gary having a well earned cuppa before opening" (Ian on left)

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the plant man Your One Stop Plant Shop

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Northampton **THURSDAY. FEBRUARY 26, 2015 BRINGING YOU THE NEWS SINCE 1720**

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HERO COPS SAVE BABY'S LIFE ON BURGLARY CALL

CONSTABLE ACTED AFTER SEEING MOTHER IN DISTRESS IN STREET

A police constable who carried out vital first aid on a Northampton baby, has described the dramatic dash to hospital that saved her life.

Pc Dec Gabriel, from Northamptonshire Police, was in a police car at a crime scene near Kingsley Park Terrace on Saturday night when he saw a woman in distress.

He sprinted over and having been told the child was having breathing problems, he performed first aid before rushing the baby named Chloe, to Northampton General Hospital.

He then went with her into A&E, where doctors said his actions had probably saved the 12-month-old's life.

Pc Gabriel, who has now been recommended for a commendation, told the Chron: "I saw this limp, lifeless girl, something I had never seen before in my life.

"I put her on to her back and checked her airway and I saw her tongue had rolled back into her throat.

"I reached in with my finger and flipped it out the way."

What came next, he said, was "the best sound I've ever heard in my life".

Pc Gabriel said: "It was the sound of life. She was sick a little bit into my hand and did this wheezing cough but I thought that was unbe-

••••• 49 I was saying 'wake up Chloe, darling, wake up

best sound I've ever heard in my life

lievable. I knew she wasn't out of the woods but, fingers crossed, she was going to be okav.

Pc Gabriel emphasised that, apart from the first aid, the life-saving operation had been a team effort. Pc Amy Diment, who went with him into the house, opened doors and cleared family members and objects from Pc Gabriel's path so he could run to the car.

He was then assisted in the car by Pc Aaron Cox. And it was Pc Andy Lee whose driving got the car, under blue lights to NGH, in three minutes. Reliving the dramatic journey, Pc Gabriel said: "She was cradled in my arms in the recovery position, in and out of consciousness.

"I thought at that point I may be carrying a dead baby here. I was saying 'Chloe, darling, please wake up, we are going to get you there. We are going to get you help'," Pc Gabriel added.



Pc Declan Gabriel has told of his relief that he was able to help save a baby's life

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Shaun Oakey and Richard Crow are residents of Toms Close in Collingtree. Shaun and Richard say they are being forced out of their homes by Northampton Borough Council, which plans to redevelop the site. The partnership says the homes will cost too much to bring up to standard



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Council set to bulldoze pensioner's house

An 83-year-old man will have to leave the village where he has lived for 50 years if Northampton Borough Council forces him to sell his house.

The man's son, Graham Crow, said his father is upset at the prospect of losing his home in Tom's Close, Collingtree, one of 16 Airey houses in the street that the local authority is trying to compulsorily purchase.

Council bosses said the houses, erected in the 1950s using prefabricated concrete columns, were in disrepair and have been classed as 'structurally defective'.

Arrangements are already being made to demolish 11 properties that stand empty and the council said it would consider imposing compulsory purchase orders on the remaining five, if those living there refuse to move.

But Mr Crow, the head of transport and travel at Northamptonshire Police, said his father, Richard, did not want to relocate and the price being offered would not be enough to buy a decent new property.

He said: "Dad is devastated and, to put it very bluntly, frightened."

The council has offered Ri-

chard, a former master builder, £122,000 for the house.

Richard said: "He grew up in this village and worked all his working life here.

"He doesn't want to have to relocate into the town centre and frankly he shouldn't have to.

"If they are privately-owned houses, why do they have to move?

"Why can't they knock down the empty homes and leave those left to get on with the rest of their lives.

In a letter to Collingtree Parish Council, the borough council's cabinet member for housing, Councillor Mary Markham (Con, Obelisk) wrote that attempts to negotiate a price with the remaining homeowners were stalling because of the "refusal of some of the owners to engage in direct discussions with the council or Northampton Partnership Homes [which now manages council housing]."

Chairman of the parish council, Malcolm Brice, said: "We are sympathetic to the people living in Toms Close.

"All we can do though is ask that the borough council comes to a solution soon," he

Council says 1950s homes are too expensive to revamp

Executive director of property services at Northampton Partnership Homes, Ken Hopkins, said the houses, constructed in the 1940s had no mains gas, were very difficult to heat and were "extremely energy inefficient".

He said they were listed under the Defective Premises Act, which means a bank or building society would be unlikely to grant a mortgage on them, making their future sale very difficult.

He said remedial structur-

al works would cost around £80,000 each to bring them up to the Decent Homes standard, which compared with around £6,000 for work to update the average property in the council stock.

"As the cost of renovation is

so high it was decided to offer the tenants new homes to try to empty the properties and demolish them," he said.

"If this can be achieved, all $the \,houses\,will\,be\,demolished$ and the land could be considered for redevelopment."





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Food bank use doubles



More and more people are receiving help from food banks but the Northampton branch is facing a funding crisis

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but it may still close

Food bank managers have no idea where 3,000 Northampton children will go for emergency handouts beyond this summer.

The Northampton Food Bank gave emergency meals to 8,500 different people last year, 3,000 of them children.

But despite the fact that the number has doubled each year since 2012, and despite there being more people in need than the food bank can help, funds have almost run

Northamptonshire County Council pledged two years of funding in 2013, but the food bank fears it is unlikely to be renewed.

If funds are not found by April, the charity will have to give notice of closure.

Anya Willis, the charity director, said: "There is nobody in Northampton set to pick up the slack of benefits changes and it falls on a local charity to provide emergency relief when people can't feed themselves.

"These are the people with nothing in their cupboard and nowhere to turn.

"The food we hand out is Spam and pasta.

"What will happen to those 3,000 children if we aren't here to fall back on?

"Nobody has the answer to

that question."

 $The \, charity \hbox{'s funding from}$ County Hall amounted to £51,000 of its £63,000 budget, with the rest made up from churches and modest business donations.

But the Food Bank also needs to expand as well as employstafftoreduce its reliance on volunteers.

Mrs Willis said: "We are still applying to Comic Relief, Northamptonshire Community Foundation and Big Lottery, but we don't have enough in the bank

"We have to remain hope-

"We believe the good work we do will be recognised."

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Parcels have doubled every year since launch

In 2012, fewer than 1,000 parcels were distributed by Northampton Food Bank. In 2013, 1,800 parcels were sent out and in 2014, 3,750 parcels were delivered, reaching 8,500 people in the last year, including over 3,000 children.

Latest figures show it

meets the immediate needs of 35 per cent of the children living in poverty in the town.

The food bank tries to promote self-reliance. Families $have \, to \, be \, in \, extreme \, financial \,$ crisis to be eligible for a food parcel, and cannot receive more than five per year. It also

wants to invest in services to make people self-reliant such as allotment, cookery and money management courses.

To get involved, give food or time or to donate or fund-raise email admin@restorenorthampton.org.uk, call 716323 or visit www.restorenorthamp-



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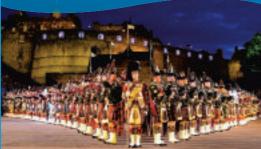
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Cat 'held down and shot with air rifle'

A cat has been left without an eye after it was believed to have been pinned down and shot at close range with an air rifle in a sickening attack in Northampton.

Mickey, a three-year-old cat, was rushed to the vet's after it returned to its home in Pine Ridge, Southfields, on Saturday with serious head injuries.

Its owner, Megan Calder, aged 27, said that due to the severity of the eye injury her pet had suffered, she originally thought it had been hit by a car.

However, when Mrs Calder took Mickey to the vet it was revealed that it had a metal pellet lodged in its skull, probably fired from an air rifle or

She said: "It is disgusting that somebody could do this

"The vet said that the injuries were likely to have been caused by the pellet being fired at close range.

"She said it was obviously a malicious thing where the gun has been fired while the cat's face was being held."



Mrs Calder said Mickey was still suffering from the effects of the traumatic attack and her six-year-old daughter, Summer, was also struggling to understand what had happened to the family pet. #

She said: "My daughter sees the cat as a brother to her.

"Since he came back from the vets, she is a bit scared with him and Mickey is a bit more fearful.

"He has been sleeping a lot

and hopefully he will keep getting better.'

Northamptonshire Police is investigating the attack on Mickey and is urging witnesses to come forward.

Witnesses or anyone with information is asked to contact Northamptonshire Police on 101 or the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111, or use the anonymous online form at www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Cloudy2Clear Windows - Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services. services.

Managing Director Trevor Skidmore feels that it's all about service Our product is simple.

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that obviously helps.
Many tradespeople have
struggled since last year
and I honestly feel that
during the good times a
minority perhaps didn't
focus on customer care
as much as they should
have done. We make sure
we turn up when we say
we will, do the job the
customer requires and
leave their house as clean
as a whistle. I often get
comments back from
customers on how they
really didn't expect that
sort of service which,
in a way, is very sad for
the service industry as a
whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service the Northampton, Kettering, Wellingborough & Corby areas and Trevor is finding that his

approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that l get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, be happy to help!

which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

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MP to officially open vets

PET owners are being invited to the official opening of a vets practice in Northampton next Friday (March 6).

VetSavers has relocated to the former medical practice building in Southfield Road, Duston, and will be officially opened at noon by Northampton South MP, Brian Binley (pictured).

The multi-vet practice moved last year and sees both private and PDSA patients from Northampton and the surrounding areas.

The new premises boast separate waiting areas for cats and dogs, multiple operating theatres, X-ray and ultra-

VetSavers' clients also benefit from 24-hour hospitalisation, thanks to out-of-hours provider, Vets Now, which is housed on the same site.



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Town chippy re-opens with new owners

A popular chip shop in Northampton has re-opened this week under new manage-

The College Street Chippy, off Gold Street in the town centre, was taken over earlier in the year by Sean Osmond and his wife, Tulin, owners of Jenny's restaurant also in Gold Street.

Mr Osmond, aged 44, said: "This place had a great reputation in the town and we want to revive and improve it.

"It's not been a bad start so far and we have had lots of positive comments.

'The traditional fish and chip menu has stayed more or less the same, but we are bringing our unique style of cooking too."

The newly-opened restaurant seats 60 and will be open Mondays to Saturdays from

While its well-known name will stay the same, the Osmonds have applied for a council grant to buy a new sign for the front of the shop.



New owners of The College Street Chippy in Northampton town centre, Sean Osmand and his wife, Tulun

They have already spent the past month decorating the interior, adding new tablecloths and posters of British seaside towns.

Customers at The College Street Chippy restaurant can enjoy a medium-sized cod and chips for £5.65, and there are special rates for pensioners







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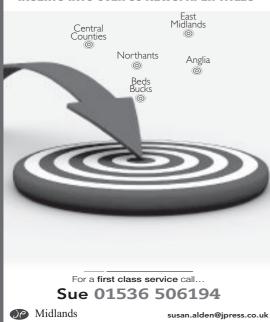
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Thursday, February 26, 2015 www.northamptonchron.co.uk

NORTHAMPTON MERCURY

Church puts in new bid for demolition

A church in Northampton has submitted plans to demolish its existing building and replace it with a community centre and a place of worship.

Broadmead Baptist Church, in Broadmead Avenue, Abington, has renewed its bid for the scheme three years after it was first approved by Northampton Borough Council.

But the church has struggled to raise enough funds to meet construction costs, which will total about £2.5 million, and has had to reapply before the window for construction that was granted in 2012 expires. So far parishioner donations, fund-raising and grants have totalled £500,000.

The application is almost identical to the original one, except for the moving of one wall and the church would ideally like to knock down its building in July next year then open the new one in September 2017. In the application design statement, Espresso Architecture said the nursery, Broadmead Money Advice



Broadmead Baptist Church, in Broadmead Avenue, Abington, has resubmitted plans to expand as it bids to raise the £2.5 million needed

Centre and place of worship will be replaced and there will be extra space for community activities. These may include extended coffee mornings, expanded youth work service or advice, counselling and dropin facilities for the elderly.

The application says: The existing buildings have occupied the site for more than 90 years, however in recent years the building format has become inadequate to serve the requirements of a modern church and its associated activities. The proposal seeks to construct a two-storey mixed-

use community and church building answering all the needs of a modern church and requirements of Oftsed for a nursery."

As well as being out of date, it is said to restrict the size of Sunday congregations and limits the number of community activities. The plan includes a new nursery for 35 children, which will operate during the working day.

Karen Coleman, operations manager, said: "We are a growing church and we would like something fit for the modern church."



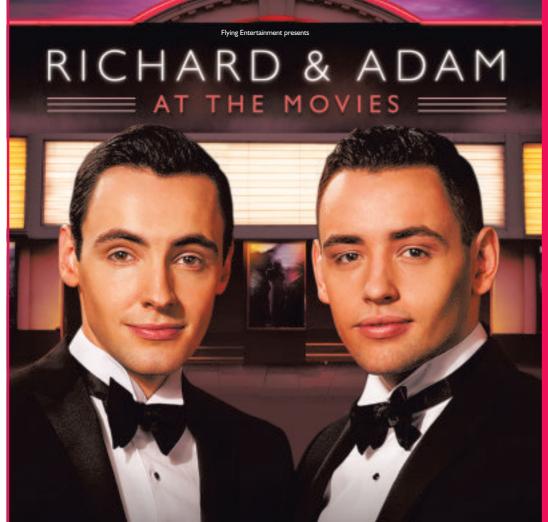
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And it is likely to be "him", with the vast majority of users set to be chaps, with an average age of 47.

That's how precisely Peugeot has researched the likely wheel winder for the pumped-up petrol and diesels powering the 308 GT, available in five-door hatch or spacious estate car form, from £24,095 for the 1.6 litre petrol hatch.

You can tell the GT apart from more humble versions by its fancy alloy wheels, radiator grille and big air intakes, and that means the fog lights have had to go.

Inside, there's the usual GT upgrade kit that takes in lots of black trim, stitched in nicely contrasting red, foot pedals wrapped in alloy, and a chunky leather-bound steering wheel. In this Peugeot's case, that wheel is tiny and the instruments can be turned to pepped-up red by a quick push of a button marked "sport". And this is when the aural fun starts.

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SPORT

Cobblers sign goalkeeper Jalal

Former Bournemouth stopper will provide competition for Duke

FOOTBALL

The Cobblers have signed Shwan Jalal to provide goalkeeping competition for Matt Duke.

Town parted company with Dean Snedker on Tuesday and have moved quickly to fill the void, bringing in the 31-yearold on a contract until the end of the season.

Jalal is best known for his time with Bournemouth, for whom he played 171 games between 2008 and 2014, and spent the first half of the current campaign with Bury but fell down the Gigg Lane pecking order when Nick Pope was signed on loan from Charlton.

The goalkeeper, who was born in Baghdad and was selected for an Iraq international squad in 2011, had his contract with the Shakers terminated in the January transfer window.

"We've brought him in to battle it out with Matt (Duke) for the first-team spot between now and the end of the season," confirmed manager Chris Wilder.

"I had him on loan at Oxford, he's won at couple of promotions at Oxford and he's an experienced goalkeeper who is a good age. It gives us a good opportunity to look at him between now and the end of the

Meanwhile, Cobblers defender Ben Tozer will miss the next four to six weeks with a knee injury.

Tozer was not in the matchday squad for last Saturday's game against York City and had his keen scanned on

The results of that scan have shown damage to the meniscus, the diagnosis for which may require a minor operation, although rest may be the preferred option.

The blow is a significant one for Northampton as Tozer can play at centre-back and is the only cover for right-back Brendan Moloney, but the impact of his loss is lessened by the return to training of Zander Diamond, after a hamstring pull, and Lewis Hornby, who has had a dead leg.

"It's a bit of a blow to us because Ben covers a few positions and it's disappointing for him and for us," he said.

"On the plus side, Zander Diamond is coming on really well and hopefully he'll be available for selection on Saturday, as will Lewis Hornby, who is back in training this



Saints snap up Bristol scrum-half Kessell

SAINTS have announced the signing of scrum-half Tom

The 25-year-old, who has recently signed a short-term deal at Championship promotion hopefuls Bristol, will move to Franklin's Gardens this summer.

Kessellhadbeenimpressing for Cornish Pirates before agreeing to join Bristol until the end of the season.

And Saints boss Jim Mallinder believes the play-

RUGBY

er has the ability to succeed in England's top flight.

"Tom has shown great promise in the Championship and has had his performances recognised with selection for the team that played Canada last year," Mallinder said.

'We believe that he has the potential to perform in the Aviva Premiership and in Europe and are looking

forward to seeing him develophere at Franklin's Gardens.

Kessell, who has previously represented England Counties, is excited by the prospect of moving to the east midlands.

He will face a fight against the likes of Kahn Fotuali'i and Lee Dickson for the Saints No.9 shirt.

And he said: "Joining the Saints is a fantastic opportunity for me. I'm really looking forward to working with the calibre of players that the club's already got.

"Hopefully I'll be able to develop as a work in progress, take any opportunity that I can get, and be the best that I can.

Meanwhile, Mallinder has urged Saints not to let their hard work go to waste when they face Harlequins on Friday night.

Mallinder's men secured a superb 21-13 success at

Bath on Saturday, stretching their lead at the top of the Aviva Premiership to nine points.

They also widened the gap between first and third, with the team occupying that position. Saracens, losing at Sale.

And the Saints boss is now keen to see his team keep their foot on the accelerator with just seven regular-season games to go.

"It's always nice to hear

 $those\,teams\,in\,third\,are\,not$ winning," Mallinder said.

'We're in a good position with a little bit of daylight between second and a bit more between third and fourth so it's good.

We were disappointed with our performance against London Irish and we needed to step up. We definitely stepped up.

"If we slip up against Harlequins on Friday it's for nothing really."



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